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FM AMCONSUL LAGOS  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6709  
INFO RUEHZK/ECOWAS COLLECTIVE IMMEDIATE  
RUEHUJA/AMEMBASSY ABUJA IMMEDIATE 6973  
RUEHBK/AMEMBASSY BANGKOK IMMEDIATE 0081  
RUEHEG/AMEMBASSY CAIRO IMMEDIATE 0129  
RUEHDK/AMEMBASSY DAKAR IMMEDIATE 0692  
RUEHLO/AMEMBASSY LONDON IMMEDIATE 0564  
RUEHML/AMEMBASSY MANILA IMMEDIATE 0103  
RUEPGDA/USEUCOM JIC VAIHINGEN GE IMMEDIATE  
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHINGTON DC IMMEDIATE  
RHEBAAA/DEPT OF ENERGY WASHINGTON DC IMMEDIATE  
RUCPDOG/DEPT OF COMMERCE WASHDC IMMEDIATE  
RUEATRS/DEPT OF TREASURY WASHDC IMMEDIATE  
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHINGTON DC IMMEDIATE  
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHINGTON DC IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T SECTION 01 OF 03 LAGOS 000324

SIPDIS

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STATE PASS DOE FOR DAS JBRODMAN AND CGAY  
TREASURY FOR ASEVERENS AND SRENENDER  
COMMERCE FOR KBURRESS  
STATE PASS TRANSPORTATION FOR MARAD  
STATE PASS USAID FOR GWEYNAND AND SLAWAETZ  
STATE FOR DS/IP/AF, AF/EX, DS/IP/OPO, DS/ICI/PII, DS/DSS/ITA

E.O. 12958: DECL: 02/18/2016  
TAGS: [EPET](#) [PGOV](#) [ASEC](#) [PTER](#) [KHLs](#) [PINR](#) [ETRD](#) [CASC](#) [NI](#)  
SUBJECT: NIGERIA: HOSTAGE-TAKING, SITREP #15

REF: LAGOS 318 AND PREVIOUS

Classified By: Acting Pol/Econ Chief Shannon Ross  
for reasons 1.4 (D/E).

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Hostage Welfare Update  
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¶1. (C) The six hostages released last night are on their way back to their respective home countries. AmCit Macon Hawkins is scheduled to fly back to Texas on an evening Air France flight via Paris. All hostages were examined and cleared by Shell physicians last night, and they have had USG accompaniment and consular assistance since release. Thai, Egyptian, and Philippine representatives accompanied the released hostages from Warri and during their debriefs.

¶2. (C) The hostages confirmed they were well-fed and well-treated except for one incident when the camp's leader threatened British citizen John Hudspith with a gun. AmCit Macon Hawkins said they were fed canned foods and the kidnappers were sensitive to religious dietary considerations. The hostages slept in a large air conditioned room with access to international news but were moved into an outdoor, palm-shaded area during the day. Descriptions of the camp match those provided by Pat Landry and contacts of Government Ekpemukpolo, and it seems the hostages are being held in the same place as the January hostages.

¶3. (C) Letters from the families of the three remaining hostages are ready, and will be forwarded to Warri this weekend. However, the released hostages said they never received letters from their employer, though Ibori had told Willbros the letters were delivered to them.

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¶4. (C) AmCit Macon Hawkins was released to Bloomberg reporter Julie Zeigler after the militants granted her a tour of their community yesterday afternoon. Other journalists then joined Hawkins. Econoff received a call from a Financial Times reporter at 5:30 p.m., giving him a rendezvous point. The boats carrying Hawkins and the journalists made two stops, and Hawkins was handed over to Delta State Government authorities, with Econoff in attendance. Hawkins was taken to the Governor's compound, where waited an hour for the Governor to appear. At about 7:30 p.m., the other 5 released hostages were brought in through the front door; State government officials told Econoff a federal government team was responsible for their release.

¶5. (C) Delta State negotiating team members, including known militant Bello Oboko, delivered a lengthy series of speeches, after which the hostages were taken to the State Security Service headquarters and debriefed. Shell dispatched a doctor, who was upset to learn the hostages, including diabetic AmCit Hawkins, had received no medical check-up or food prior to questioning. The hostages arrived safely at the Shell compound by 11 p.m., where they received full medical check-ups and a meal. They departed Warri this morning at approximately 9:30 after a second debrief by Nigerian Defense Intelligence Agency officials. From Warri they travelled by Shell plane to Lagos and then to Willbros headquarters.

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Hostage Debrief Update  
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¶6. (C) AmCit Macon Hawkins and the other five hostages were de-briefed by the FBI. The third country nationals were accompanied by their respective consuls. Hawkins said he was subjected to regular political speeches and diatribes on the poor living conditions of Delta Ijaws and the evils of various oil companies. He said Exxon Mobil was the only major oil company never singled out for particularly egregious deeds. He said on the weekends youths, whom he called "weekend warriors," would come to the camp from area universities to train and drill with the militants. Hawkins had been optimistic all nine hostages would be released by 10 p.m. last night, but the militants told the five released later as they left the last three hostages would follow them in a few days.

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Negotiations Update  
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¶7. (C) The Delta State Government negotiators seem progressively more out of the loop. Shell security contacts do not believe Governor Ibori is in direct contact with the kidnapers, and the focus of negotiations is shifting to Abuja. (Comment. Many sources agree that the Federal Government (F) appears to be opening concurrent lines of negotiations. End Comment.)

¶8. (C) Movement for the Survival of the Ogoni People (MOSOP) President Ledum Mittee claims he received a call from the kidnapers this morning, asking for him to be mediator again in the final hostage release, to occur soon. However, Mittee has told us he will likely follow the advice of Rivers State Governor Peter Odili, who suggested he stay away from negotiations and leave everything to Ibori.

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Energy Update: Shell Facilities Still Closed  
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¶9. (C) There is no change in the status of damaged or closed Shell facilities, and production remains reduced approximately 550,000 bpd. Press reports the nation's power loss has increased to over 1,000 megawatts.

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Military Update  
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¶10. (S) Military sources took credit for the release of the five hostages.

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Media Update  
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¶11. (U) The Vanguard reported U.S. Ambassador John Campbell spoke at a ceremony marking the donation of anti-riot and anti-terrorism equipment to the Nigerian Police Force, emphasizing the importance of a well-equipped police force and referring specific questions about hostage negotiations to the GON.

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Consular Update  
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¶12. (C) There have been no reports of additional attacks on AmCits.  
HOWE